

Town Hall (City Hall)
226-232 Merrimack Street
Lowell
Middlesex County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-995

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HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE MASSACHUSETTS	COUNTY MIDDLESEX	TOWN OR VICINITY LOWELL
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) TOWN HALL		HABS NO. MA-995
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE City Hall		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 226-232 Merrimack Street		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1830	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Isaiah Rogers, architect from Boston	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The Town Hall was built in 1830 by the proprietors of the Locks and Canals, agents of Lowell's textile companies, who managed town affairs and most other aspects of early community life. The structure symbolizes the era when the textile (con't. on page two)		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Greek Revival with predominant Colonial Revival styling		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Original foundation was of granite. Brick bearing construction and timber framing constitute the building's structural and framing systems.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Dimensions: approx. 94' X 60'. Shape: rectangular. Original number of bays across the front and side elevations were 5 and 3 respectively.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE The north and west elevations have pressed red brick in stretcher bond. The south and east elevations have common red brick in common bond. Roof vents have replaced the original paired end chimneys. One of the glass and metal storefronts is cast iron. Upper floor windows, including those with plain and scrolled (con't. on page two)		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) The room plans have changed greatly. The original plans were as follows: Basement, four rooms; First floor, eight rooms and a corridor; Second floor, one large meeting room and two small rooms. The interior is generally plain in appearance. Many doors (con't. on p. two)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES The following records physical changes of the building in chronological order: Ca. 1833 roof struts sawed off to create practice rooms for the militia (con't. on page two)		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Fair. In need of maintenance and minor repair.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE This building is one of the five structures recorded in the 1979 Lowell project, which was co-sponsored by HABS, the North Atlantic Regional Office of the National Park Service and the Adams National Historic Site. Peter G. Darlow served as the project supervisor. Field records include early views of the building and sketched floor plans.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.)		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Historic American Buildings Survey Summer Team, 1979; Susan McCown, HABS editor, 1984		DATE

SIGNIFICANCE (continued from page one):

companies dominated Lowell and the city government was an extension of their vested interests. The simple Greek Revival structure represented a functional and adaptable brick architecture developed by the mill owners in Lowell. As originally constructed, the first floor and basement were rented to commercial tenants, the second floor was used to conduct town business and the attic was occupied by two militia companies. In 1896, when the city government relocated to its present site, the Town Hall was sold to a private developer, who renovated it to its present Colonial Revival appearance for commercial and office uses.

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (continued from page one):

pedimented heads and one in Palladian style, have Colonial Revival treatment. The original windows had multi-paned double-hung sash and plain lintels. The half-elliptical fanlight on the west gable end is possibly original. The central bay pediment on the front elevation is not original.

INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (continued from page one):

are replacements. Some original interior trim and fixtures are still in place.

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES (continued from page one):

- 1837 Front entrance built to accommodate the militia in the attic. General repairs also undertaken
- 1854 Third floor constructed; new Merrimack Street storefronts added and more space built
- 1878 Remodeling undertaken: Re-boarding and slating of the roof; the finishing of two attic rooms; cementing of cellar floor
- 1886 One-story brick projection added to the rear of the building to create space for the Treasurer's Office. Posts and columns added at the back wall of the original building
- 1896 Major changes undertaken to reflect the new owner's chosen style, Colonial Revival. Fenestration of the north, south and west facades completely changed. Variety of window head shapes and spandrels installed. Storefronts modernized. A central bay pediment built on the Merrimack Street facade. Upper floor partitions installed